



EPA's Council for Regulatory Environmental Modeling Program

Factsheet

The Council for Regulatory Environmental Modeling (CREM), a council of senior managers from across the EPA, was established in 2000, to promote consistency and consensus among environmental model developers and users. At the request of EPA's Science Advisor, the CREM is focusing on efforts to help ensure that EPA:

- Documents and communicates the data, algorithms, and expert judgments used to develop models.
- Documents and implements best management practices to use models consistently and appropriately.
- Establishes and implements criteria so that model-based decisions satisfy regulatory requirements and Agency guidelines.
- Facilitates information exchange among model developers and users so that models can be iteratively and continuously improved.
- Proactively anticipates scientific and technological developments so EPA is prepared for the next generation of environmental models.

Over the years, a wide variety of models have been used to support EPA's decisions and policies. These models estimate the environmental fate of pollutants, their impacts on human health and the environment, and the costs and benefits of alternative policies. Frequently, these models become the basis for environmental cleanup, protection, or regulation. Therefore, models underlie how the Agency chooses to address a multitude of environmental questions.

Given this foundational role, models themselves can become part of the controversy over environmental initiatives. Parties impacted by EPA regulations have at times successfully challenged these regulations in court by questioning the validity of the models upon which they were based. EPA's Information Quality Guidelines establish a process for parties impacted by the Agency's use of models to question the data, methods, and assumptions underlying these models.

In a 2002 memorandum, "Strengthening Science at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency," the EPA Administrator listed the CREM as a priority, to develop the policy guidance necessary to facilitate appropriate model development and application within the regulatory context.



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